

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A washing method in a steam injection type washing machine, comprising:

a washing step for performing a washing process while rotating a wash tub about a substantially horizontal axis when wash water is supplied into the wash tub; and

a steam supplying step for injecting steam into the wash tub at the top of the wash tub during execution of the washing step, thereby ~~increasing a temperature of the wash water supplied into the wash tub~~ wetting clothes rapidly in the wash tub.

2. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 1, wherein:

the washing step comprises a clothes wetting step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to a water level lower than a predetermined water level for washing of clothes, thereby causing clothes contained in the wash tub to be wetted by the supplied wash water, and a main washing step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to the predetermined water level for washing of clothes after execution of the clothes wetting step, and performing a main washing process; and

the wash water supplied into the wash tub is pumped to a top portion of the wash tub, at the clothes wetting step, to circulate through the wash tub, thereby spraying the wash water into the wash tub at the top of the wash tub.

3. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 1, wherein the steam supplying step comprises:

a water supplying step for supplying ~~wash~~-water into a tank provided with a heater;

a steam generating step for heating the ~~wash~~-water supplied into the tank by operation of the heater, thereby generating steam; and

a steam injecting step for injecting the steam generated at the steam generating step into the wash tub.

4. (Original) The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the water supplied into the tank at the water supplying step is limited to a predetermined water level by a water level sensor provided at the tank.

5. (Original) The washing machine according to claim 3, wherein the water supplying step is executed while wash water is supplied into the wash tub.

6. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 5, wherein the water supplying step comprises the steps of:

simultaneously opening a water supply line adapted to guide wash water into the tank and a steam supply line adapted to guide steam from the tank into the wash tub when wash water is supplied into the wash tub; and

~~closing the water supply line and the steam supply line when wash water is supplied into the wash tub to a minimum reset water level sensible by a water level sensor provided at the wash tub.~~

7. (Original) The washing method according to claim 5, wherein the water supplying step further comprises the step of:

if an internal temperature of the tank reaches a predetermined temperature, re-supplying wash water into the tank until the water level sensor senses a variation in water level.

8. (Original) The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the operation of the heater is stopped when an internal pressure of the tank reaches a predetermined pressure at the steam generating step.

9. (Original) The washing method according to claim 8, wherein the steam injecting step is executed when the operation of the heater is stopped at the steam generating step.

10. (Original) The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the operation of the heater is stopped when a temperature of heat generated from the heater reaches a predetermined temperature at the steam generating step.

11. (Original) The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the heater is operated for a predetermined operating time at the steam generating step.

12. (Original) The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the steam injecting step is executed when an internal temperature of the tank reaches to a predetermined temperature.

13. (Original) The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the steam injecting step is completed when a wash water temperature of the wash tub reaches a predetermined wash water temperature.

14. (Currently Amended) A washing method in a steam injection type washing machine, comprising:

a washing step for wetting clothes contained in a wash tub by wash water supplied into the wash tub while circulating the wash water and spraying the wash water into the wash tub at the top of the wash tub ~~through the wash tub~~, and performing a washing process while rotating the wash tub about a substantially horizontal axis;

a water supplying step for supplying wash-water into a tank provided with a heater during execution of the washing step;

a steam generating step for heating the wash-water supplied into the tank by operation of the heater, thereby generating steam; and

a steam injecting step for injecting the steam generated at the steam generating step into the wash tub at the top of the wash tub, thereby wetting clothes rapidly in the wash tub.

15. (Original) The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the water supplying step is executed while wash water is re-supplied into the wash tub at the washing step.

16. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the water supplying step comprises the steps of:

simultaneously opening a water supply line adapted to guide wash water into the tank and a steam supply line adapted to guide steam from the tank into the wash tub when wash water is supplied into the wash tub; and

~~closing the water supply line and the steam supply line when wash water is supplied into the wash tub to a minimum reset water level sensible by a water level sensor provided at the wash tub.~~

17. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 16, wherein the water supplying step further comprises the step of:

if an internal temperature of the tank reaches a predetermined temperature, re-supplying wash water into the tank until the water level sensor senses a variation in water level.

18. (Original) The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the operation of the heater is stopped when an internal pressure of the tank reaches a predetermined pressure at the steam generating step, and simultaneously, the steam injecting step is executed.

19. (Original) The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the operation of the heater is stopped when a temperature of heat generated from the heater reaches a predetermined temperature at the steam generating step.

20. (Original) The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the heater is operated for a predetermined operating time at the steam generating step.

21. (Original) The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the steam injecting step is executed when an internal temperature of the tank reaches to a predetermined temperature.

22. (Currently Amended) A washing method in a steam injection type washing machine, comprising:

a washing step for performing a washing process while rotating a wash tub about a substantially horizontal axis when wash water is supplied into the wash tub;

a water supplying step for filling ~~wash~~-water in a tank provided with a heater while the wash water is supplied into the wash tub to a minimum reset water level sensible by a water level sensor provided at the wash tub;

a steam generating step for operating the heater until an internal pressure or temperature of the tank reaches to a predetermined internal pressure or temperature, or until an operating time of the heater reaches a predetermined operating time, after execution of the water supplying step, to heat the wash water in the tank, thereby generating steam in the tank; and

a steam injecting step for, ~~if the internal temperature of the tank reaches the predetermined internal temperature,~~ injecting the generated steam into the wash tub until a wash water temperature of the wash tub reaches a predetermined wash water temperature, thereby wetting clothes rapidly in the wash tub.

23. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 22, wherein:

the washing step comprises a clothes wetting step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to a water level lower than a predetermined water level for washing of clothes, thereby causing clothes contained in the wash tub to be wetted by the supplied wash water, and a main washing step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to the predetermined water level for washing of clothes after execution of the clothes wetting step, and performing a main washing process; and

the wash water supplied into the wash tub is pumped to a top portion of the wash tub, at the clothes wetting step, to circulate through the wash tub, thereby spraying into the wash tub at the top of the wash tub.

24. (Currently Amended) A washing method in a washing machine comprising:
washing clothes in a wash drum with water by rotating the wash drum about a substantially horizontal axis; and
injecting steam into the wash drum at the top of the wash drum with the water therein during the washing step, thereby wetting clothes rapidly in the wash drum.

25. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 24, wherein, during injecting steam into the wash drum, the steam is continuously supplied into the wash drum.

26. (Currently Amended) The washing method according to claim 24, further comprising a circulating the water of the wash drum, thereby spraying the wash water into the wash drum at the top of the wash drum.

27. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 26, wherein circulating the water is performed during a clothes wetting step.

28. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 24, wherein washing clothes in the wash drum includes a clothes wetting step for wetting clothes, and a main washing step for mainly washing the clothes.

29. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 28, wherein the steam is supplied into the wash drum during at least one of the clothes wetting step and the main washing step.

30. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 27, wherein a predetermined water level of the wash drum in the clothes wetting step is lower than a predetermined water level of the wash drum in the main washing step.

31. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 24, wherein injecting steam into the wash drum includes supplying water to be heated; generating steam by heating the water; and injecting the steam into the wash drum.

32. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 31, wherein supplying water is concurrently performed with the washing step.

33. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 32, wherein supplying water is adjusted based on a predetermined minimum reset level of the wash drum.

34. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 24, wherein injecting steam is adjusted based on a predetermined temperature of the wash drum.

35. (Previously Presented) The washing method according to claim 31, wherein injecting steam is performed based on at least one of a temperature of the steam, a pressure of the steam, and an operating time of heating the water to be heated.

Claims 36-38. (Canceled).